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ly infixing his sting just below my left ear. The pain was unusually severe, and in a few moments I felt my swallow greatly affected. Much alarmed, I hastened into the house to procure some sweet oil, with which to rub the part affected. In a little while I felt entire relief from the spasm which had alarmed me, and in a quarter of an hour, or twenty minutes, continuing the friction all this time, was perfectly relieved from all pain."

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

A CAUTION RESPECTING THE USE OF STRAMONIUM.

FROM some experiments, it appears, that the leaves of this plant are unquestionably highly useful in

asthma, while the effect of the seed and wood are quite different. Great care is necessary not to do mischief by the misapplication of a powerful remedy, through ignorance. Pretenders to knowledge, who with a little smattering are often presumptuous, may promote much injury. I have heard of a mistake lately made: A person afflicted with the asthma, was recommended to smoke the wood of the crab-apple, because some one ignorantly mistook the name of Stramonium, botanically named *Datura*, and by others thorn-apple, for the crab-tree. No person should from a superficial knowledge, venture to prescribe. Quackery, or an itch for prescribing without competent skill, often leads to mistakes which produce irreparable injury. C.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

AN EULOGIUM ON PRESIDENT MONTESQUIEU; BY MONSIEUR D'ALEMBERT.

(Concluded from vol. 6. page 465.)

THE unsuccessfulness of this writer ought greatly to discourage him: he wanted to attack a wise man in that place which is most sensible to every good citizen, but he only procured him an addition of glory as a man of letters: *the Defence of the Spirit of Laws* appeared. This work, on account of that moderation, that truth, that delicacy of ridicule which abound in it, ought to be regarded as a model in this way. M. de Montesquieu, charged by his adversary with atrocious imputations, might easily have rendered him odious: he did better, he made him ridiculous. If we are beholden to an aggressor for that good which

he has done us, without wanting to do it, we owe him eternal thanks for having procured us this masterpiece. But what adds still more to the merit of this precious little piece is this, that the author without thinking of it, has there drawn a picture of himself: those who knew him, think they hear him; and posterity will be convinced, when reading his *Defence*, that his conversation was not inferior to his writings; an encomium which few great men have deserved.

Another circumstance gave him plainly the advantage in this dispute. The critic, who as a proof of his attachment to religion, attacks its ministers, loudly accused the clergy of France, and especially the faculty of theology, of indifference for the cause of God, because they did not authentically proscribe so pernicious

a work. The faculty had a title to despise the reproach of a nameless writer: but religion was in the question; a commendable delicacy made it resolve to examine the *Spirit of Laws*. Tho' it has been employed about it several years, it has not yet pronounced any thing; and if some slight inadvertencies, which are almost inevitable in so vast a career, should have escaped M. de Montesquieu, the long and scrupulous attention which they would have required from the most enlightened body of the church, might prove at least how excusable they are. But this body, full of prudence, will do nothing rashly in so important an affair. It knows the grounds of reason and of faith: it knows that the work of a man of letters ought not to be examined like that of a theologian; that the bad consequences, which odious interpretations may draw from a proposition, do not render the proposition blameable in itself; that besides we live in an unlucky age, in which the interests of religion have need of being delicately managed; and that it may do hurt to weak people to throw an ill-timed suspicion of incredulity upon geniuses of the first rank; that, in a word, in spite of this unjust accusation, M. de Montesquieu was always esteemed, visited, and well received by the greatest and most respectable characters in the church. Would he have preserved among men of worth that esteem which he enjoyed, if they had regarded him as a dangerous writer?

While insects plagued him in his own country, England erected a monument to his glory. In 1752, M. d'Assier, celebrated for the medals which he has struck in honour of several illustrious men, came from London to Paris to strike one of him. M. de la Tour, an artist of such superior talents, and so respectable

for his disinterestedness and greatness of mind, had ardently desired to give a new lustre to his pencil, by transmitting to posterity the portrait of the author of the *Spirit of Laws*; he only wanted the satisfaction of painting him; and he deserved, like Apelles, that this honour should be reserved for him: but M. de Montesquieu, as sparing of M. de la Tour's time, as he himself was free of it, constantly and politely refused his pressing solicitations. M. d'Assier at first bore with such difficulties. "Do you believe," said he at last to M. de Montesquieu, "that there is not as much pride in refusing my offer, as in accepting of it?" Overcome by this pleasantry, he permitted M. d'Assier to do whatever he would.

The author of the *Spirit of Laws*, in fine, was peaceably enjoying his glory, when he fell sick at the beginning of February: his health, naturally delicate, began to decay for some time past, by the slow and almost infallible effect of deep study, by the uneasiness which they had endeavoured to give him on account of his work; in a word, by that kind of life which he was obliged to lead at Paris, which he felt to be fatal to him. But the eagerness with which his company was sought after was too keen, not to be sometimes indiscreet; they would, without perceiving it, enjoy him at the expense of himself. Scarce had the news of the danger in which he was spread abroad, but it became the object of the conversation and anxiety of the public. His house was never empty of persons of all ranks who came to enquire about his health, some out of real affection, others to have the appearance of it, or to follow the crowd. His majesty, penetrated with the loss which his kingdom was about to sustain, enquired about him several times; a testi-

mony of goodness and justice which does equal honour to the monarch and the subject. M. de Montesquieu's end was not unworthy of his life. Oppressed with cruel pains, far from a family that was dear to him, and which had not the comfort of closing his eyes, surrounded by some friends, and a great crowd of spectators, he preserved, to his last moments, a calmness and tranquility of soul. In a word, after having performed with decency every duty, full of confidence in the eternal being, whom he was about to be reunited with, he died with the tranquility of a man of worth, who had never consecrated his talents but to the improvement of virtue and humanity. France and Europe lost him the 10th of February, 1755, aged sixty-six.

All the public news-papers published this event as a misfortune. We may apply to M. de Montesquieu what was formerly said of an illustrious Roman; that no body, when told of his death, showed any joy at it—that no body even forgot him when he was no more. Foreigners were eager to demonstrate their regrets: Lord Chesterfield, whom it is enough to name, caused to be published in one of the public London papers, an article to his honour, an article worthy of the one and of the other; it is the portrait of Anaxagoras, drawn by Pericles.*

* See this encomium in English, as we read it in the paper called the Evening Post: "On the 10th of this month, died, at Paris, universally and sincerely regretted, Charles Secondat, baron of Montesquieu, and president à Mortier of the parliament of Bourdeaux. His virtues did honour to human nature, his writings justice. A friend to mankind, he asserted their undoubted and unalienable rights, with freedom, even in his own country, whose prejudices in matters of religion and government (*we must remember 'tis an Englishman who speaks*) he had long lamented,

The royal academy of sciences and belles lettres of Prussia, though it is not its custom to pronounce the *éloge* of foreign members, thought themselves bound to do him an honour, which it had not before done to any one but the illustrious John Bernouilli. M. de Maupeituis, notwithstanding he was at that time indisposed, performed himself this last duty to his friend, and would not permit an office so dear and so melancholy to fall to the share of any other person. To so many honourable suffrages in favour of M. de Montesquieu, we believe we may add, without indiscretion, those praises which were given him, in presence of one of us, by that very monarch to whom this celebrated academy owes its lustre, a prince made to feel those losses which philosophy sustains, and at the same time to comfort her.

The seventeenth of February, the French academy, according to custom, performed a solemn service for him, at which, notwithstanding the rigour of the season, almost all the learned men of this body, who were not absent from Paris, thought it their duty to assist. They ought, at this melancholy ceremony, to have placed the Spirit of Laws upon his coffin, as heretofore they exposed, opposite to that of Raphael, his last picture of the transfiguration. This simple and affecting ornament would have been a fine funeral oration.

Hitherto we have only considered M. de Montesquieu as a writer and

and endeavoured (not without some success) to remove. He well knew, and justly admired the happy constitution of this country, where fixed and known laws equally restrain monarchy from tyranny, and liberty from licentiousness. His works will illustrate his name, and survive him, as long as right reason, moral obligation, and the true Spirit of Laws shall be understood, respected, and maintained."

philosopher: it would be to rob him of the half of his glory, to pass over in silence his agreeable personal qualities.

He had, in company, a sweetness and gaiety of temper always the same. His conversation was spirited, agreeable, and instructive, by the great number of men and of nations whom he had known. It was, like his style, concise, full of wit and sallies, without gall, and without satire. Nobody told a story in a more lively manner, more readily, or with more grace, and less affectation: he knew that the conclusion of an agreeable story is always the point in view; he therefore made dispatch to come at it, and produced the effect, without having long promised it.

His frequent absence of mind only rendered him more amiable: he always awaked from it by some unexpected stroke, which reanimated the languishing conversation: besides, these were never either frolicsome, shocking, or troublesome. The fire of his genius, the great number of ideas with which it was furnished, gave rise to them; but this never happened in the middle of an interesting or serious conversation; the desire of pleasing those in whose company he was, made him attentive to them without affectation, and without constraint.

The agreeableness of his conversation not only resembled his character and his genius, but even that kind of method which he observed in his study. Though capable of deep and long continued meditation, he never exhausted his strength; he always left off application, before he felt the least symptom of fatigue*.

He was sensible to glory; but he did not wish to attain to it, but by deserving it. He never endeavoured to augment his own by those underhand practices, by those dark and shameful methods, which dishonour the character of the man, without adding to that of the author.

Worthy of every distinction, and of every reward, he asked nothing, and he was not surprised that he was forgot: but he has adventured, even in delicate circumstances, to protect at court men of letters, who were persecuted, celebrated, and unfortunate, and has obtained favours for them.

Though he lived with the great, whether out of necessity, or propriety, or taste, their company was not necessary to his happiness. He retired whenever he could to his estate in the country; he there again, with joy, met his philosophy, his books, and his repose. Surrounded, at his leisure hours, with country people, after having studied man, in the commerce of the world, and in the history of nations, he studied him also in those simple people, whom nature alone has instructed, and he could from them learn something; he conversed cheerfully with them; he endeavoured, like Socrates, to find out their genius; he appeared as happy when conversing

we had said before, that M. de Montesquieu's health was impaired by the slow and almost infallible effect of deep study. But why, when he was comparing the two places, has he suppressed these words, *Slow, and almost infallible*, which he had under his eyes? 'Tis evidently because he perceived, that an effect which is slow, is not a bit less real for being not felt immediately; and that, consequently, these words destroy that appearance of contradiction which he pretends to point out.—Such is the fidelity of this author in trifles, and for a stronger reason in more serious matters.

* The author of the anonymous and periodical paper which we mentioned before, pretends to find a manifest contradiction, between what we say here, and that which

with them, as in the most brilliant assemblies, especially when he made up their differences, and comforted them under their distress by his beneficence.

Nothing does greater honour to his memory, than the method in which he lived, which some people have pretended to blame as extravagant in a proud and avaricious age, extremely unfit to find out, and still less to feel the real benevolent motives of it.

M. de Montesquieu would neither make encroachments upon the fortune of his family, by those supplies which he gave the unfortunate, nor by those considerable expenses, which his long tour of travelling, the weakness of his sight, and the printing of his works had exposed him to. He transmitted to his children, without diminution or augmentation, the estate which he received from his ancestors; he added nothing to it but the glory of his name, and the example of his life. He had married in 1715, dame Jane de Lartigue, daughter of Peter de Lartigue, lieutenant-colonel of the regiment of Molevrier; he had two daughters and one son by her, who by his character, his morals, and his works, has shown himself worthy of such a father.

Those who love truth and their country, will not be displeased to find some of his maxims here: he thought,—

That every part of the state ought to be equally subject to the laws, but that the privileges of every part of the state ought to be respected, when their effects have nothing contrary to that natural right which obliges every citizen equally to concur to the public good; that ancient possession was in this kind the first of titles, and the most inviolable of rights, which it was always unjust,

and sometimes dangerous, to want to shake.

That magistrates, in all circumstances, and notwithstanding whatever advantage it might be to their own body, ought never to be any thing but magistrates—without partiality and without passion, like the laws which absolve and punish without love and hatred.

In a word, he said, upon occasion of those ecclesiastical disputes which have so much employed the Greek emperors and christians, that theological disputes, when they are not confined to the schools, infallibly dishonour a nation in the eyes of its neighbours: in fact, the contempt in which wise men hold those quarrels, does not vindicate the character of their country; because sages making every where the least noise, and being the smallest number, 'tis never from them that the nation is judged of.

The importance of those works which we have had occasion to mention in this panegyric, has made us pass over in silence less considerable ones, which served as a relaxation to our author, and which, in any other person, would have merited an encomium. The most remarkable of them is the temple of Gnids, which was very soon published after the Persian Letters. M. de Montesquieu, after having been Horace, Theophrastus, and Lucian, in those, was an Ovid and Anacreon, in this new essay. It is no more the despotic love of the east which he proposes to paint; it is the delicacy and simplicity of pastoral love, such as it is in an unexperienced heart, which the commerce of the world has not yet corrupted. The author, fearing perhaps that a picture so opposite to our manners should appear too languid and uniform, has endeavoured to animate it by the most

agreeable images. He transports the reader into enchanted scenes, the view of which, to say the truth, little interests the lover in his happiest moments, but the description of which still flatters the imagination, when the passions are gratified. Inspired by his subject, he hath adorned his prose with that animated, figurative, and poetic style, which the romance of Telemachus gave the first example of amongst us. We do not know why some censurers of the temple of Gnidus have said upon this occasion, that it ought to have been wrote in verse. The poetic style, if we understand, as we ought by this word, a style full of warmth and images, does not stand in need of the uniform march and cadency of versification to be agreeable: but if we only make this style to consist in a diction loaded with needless epithets, in the cold and trivial descriptions of the wings and quiver of love, and of such objects, versification will add nothing to the merit of these beaten ornaments; in vain will we look for the life and spirit of it. However this be, the temple of Gnidus, being a sort of prose, it belongs to our celebrated writers to determine the rank which it ought to hold: it is worthy of such judges.

We believe at least the descriptions in this work, may with success stand one of the principal tests of poetic descriptions, that of being represented on canvass. But what we ought chiefly to observe in the temple of Gnidus, is that Anacreon himself is always the observer and the philosopher there. In the fourth canto, the author appears to describe the manners of the Cyberites, and it may easily be perceived that these are our own manners. The preface especially bears the mark of the author of the Persian Letters. When he represents the Temple of Gnidus as a translation from a Greek manuscript, a piece of wit which has been so much disfigured since by bad imitators, he takes occasion to paint, by one stroke of his pen, the folly of critics, and the pedantry of translators. He concludes with these words, which deserve to be repeated:—"If serious people require some other work of me of a less frivolous nature, I can easily satisfy them; I have been labouring thirty years at a work of twelve pages, which will contain all that we know of metaphysics, politics, and morality, and all that the greatest authors have forgot in the volumes which they have published on these sciences."

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The following article from the pen of our countryman, D. B. Warden, has been obligingly transmitted to us. Contrary to our usual practice of not accepting the aid of gratuitous criticism, we give a place to it, to aid the writer's views of clearing the United States of North America, the land of his adoption, from aspersions, which it has

been fashionable both by French and British writers to throw on it, America with all its imperfections, is a land of liberty, and its government is most fully actuated by a sympathy with popular opinion. The advocates of a strong government, whether in France or Britain, do not relish the influence of the people, and take a plea-